

excellence served as an inspiration to minority and nonminority officers. To General Waller's wife, Marion, his family and friends, and to the Army community, I extend my deepest sym-

pathy. He will be remembered as one of America's finest soldiers and most capable military leaders.

## Memorandum on the Welfare Initiative for Teen Parents

*May 10, 1996*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services*

*Subject:* Welfare Initiative Regarding Teen Parents

This memorandum will confirm my directive to you to implement the plan I announced on Saturday, May 4, 1996, to help teen parents break free of the cycle of welfare dependency by living at home, staying in school, and getting the education they need to get good jobs.

I direct you to exercise your legal authority to take the following steps to implement that plan:

- (1) require States to submit plans describing how they will ensure that teen parents stay in school and prepare for employment;
- (2) require teen parents who have dropped out of school to sign personal responsibility plans that spell out how such teens are going to move towards supporting and car-

ing for themselves and their children, including attendance at school;

- (3) allow States to reward with cash allowances teen parents who stay in school and graduate, as well as require States to sanction teens who do not;
- (4) challenge States to use the authority they have to require minor mothers to live at home; and
- (5) monitor State performance in the foregoing areas.

You have advised me that you have legal authority to take these actions under titles IV-A and IV-F of the Social Security Act.

The plan I have outlined will help assure that the welfare system requires teen parents to follow responsible paths to independence. Its swift implementation is vital to achieving our goal of further instilling the American values of work, family, and personal responsibility into our welfare system.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

## The President's Radio Address

*May 11, 1996*

Good morning. Tomorrow millions of Americans will honor our mothers with hugs and bouquets and visits for dinner. Others of us will simply offer up a silent prayer for the mother who still lives in our heart but who has left this Earth. I miss my own mother very much, especially on Mother's Day. I can't give her roses tomorrow, but with your help we can honor all mothers by giving mothers-to-be something far more important, the assurance that when they bring a baby into this world, they will not be rushed out of the hospital until they and their health care provider decide it is medi-

cally safe for both mother and child. Today I want to discuss legislation that will guarantee mothers the quality care they need when they've had a baby.

In 1970, the average length of stay for an uncomplicated hospital delivery was 4 days. By 1992, the average had declined to 2 days. Now a large and growing number of insurance companies are refusing to pay for anything more than a 24-hour stay, except in the most extreme circumstances, and some have recommended releasing women as early as 8 hours after delivery.

This has gone from being an economical trend to a dangerous one, one that carries with it the potential for serious health consequences. Early release of infants can result in numerous problems, including feeding problems, severe dehydration, brain damage, and stroke. In addition, many mothers are not physically capable of providing for a newborn's needs 24 hours after giving birth. Often they're exhausted, in pain, and faced with an overwhelming set of new responsibilities. Many first-time mothers also need more than 24 hours in the hospital to receive instruction in basic infant care and breast feeding. And sometimes an early discharge can be fatal.

Michelle Bauman testified before a Senate committee that she was told to go home 28 hours after her daughter was born. Her baby died within one day of going home. If she had been allowed a 48-hour stay, she would have been in the hospital when her daughter's symptoms appeared. As she so tragically put it, another 24 hours, and her baby's symptoms would have surfaced "so that we could have planned a christening, not a funeral."

Susan Jones and her baby son were discharged after about 24 hours. It turns out he had a heart defect which was not noticed by the hospital or the home health nurse who came to visit on the third day. The baby died. Susan and an independent group of pediatric cardiologists believe the problem would have been noticed in the hospital by the second or third day.

As a nation that values the health of women and children, we must not turn our backs on this problem. There is an emerging national consensus that we must put a stop to these so-called drive-through deliveries. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Pediatrics have issued guidelines recommending a minimum stay of 48 hours following most normal deliveries, and 96 hours following most cesarean sections. Sixteen States have enacted laws to guarantee that level

of coverage and 25 more are considering such a move.

A growing number of hospitals have taken it upon themselves to provide the second day of coverage free. And one group of insurers, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans of Pennsylvania, has responded to public concerns by voluntarily offering 48-hour minimum coverage. I believe every insurance company should step up to this problem and do what these insurers in Pennsylvania have done.

But in the absence of coverage for all women in all States, we have a responsibility to take action in Washington. Already, a Senate bill and separate House bills have been introduced, most with bipartisan support, to guarantee 48-hour post partum hospital stays for mothers and their children.

I urge Members of Congress to move legislation forward as soon as possible that makes this protection for mothers and their children the law of the land. No insurance company should be free to make the final judgment about what is medically best for newborns and their mothers. That decision should be left up to doctors, nurses, and mothers themselves. Saving the life and health of mothers and newborns is more important than saving a few dollars.

America's mothers hold a special place in our hearts. They provide the lessons and care that enable all of our children to embrace the opportunities of this great land. They deliver the precious gift of life. Let's give them a Mother's Day gift they richly deserve. Let's guarantee them 48-hour hospital stays to protect their health and the health of their newborn babies. Mothers sacrifice so much for us. It's the least we can do for them.

Happy Mother's Day, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5 p.m. on May 10 at Pennsylvania State University in State College for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 11. A portion of this address could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.